AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #316

BOOK THREE: Fire
CHAPTER SIXTEEN: "The Southern Raiders"

Written By

Elizabeth Ehasz

As Broadcast Draft
January 8th, 2007

ACT ONE

EXT. WESTERN AIR TEMPLE - EARLY MORNING

It's quiet and quite beautiful -- the Sun just peeks over the edge of the rocks, and the mist and clouds beneath the cliffside make the temple appear to be floating, heaven-like.

INT. WESTERN AIR TEMPLE - SIMULTANEOUS

Here in a large room just off a main patio of the Air Temple, we pan around and see our gang, including the extended group, deep in slumber.

EXT./INT. WESTERN AIR TEMPLE - SIMULTANEOUS

Everyone sleeps on, but now SHADOWS appear in the clouds beneath the temple spires as a fleet of airships RISES UP, emerging from the mist. Azula is leading a SURPRISE RAID on the temple! The first bombs WHIZ through the air, as one by one, everyone (except Katara) wakes in horror, shock and confusion. Amidst falling bombs and chaos, Zuko struggles to wake Katara.

Zuko rolls her out of the way, covering her with his body protectively just as a falling shelf of rock crashes onto the spot where she slept a moment ago. Katara finally wakes. *

ZUKO
Watch out!

KATARA
(furious)
What are you doing?!

ZUKO
(still on top of her)
Keeping rocks from crushing you!

KATARA
(annoyed)
Okay, I'm not crushed -- you can get off of me now.

Zuko obliges, and Katara SCRAMBLES off.

ZUKO
(sotto to himself)
I'll take that as a "thank you."

Absolute chaos roars all around. BOMBS EXPLODE, PEOPLE YELL, and ROCK SHATTERS as multiple airships attack the temple from the air. Toph and Haru Earthbend open a tunnel through the wall of the temple behind them.

TOPH
(indicating the tunnel)
Come on! We can get out through here!

The kids start to head into the tunnel, but Zuko doesn't follow.

AANG
What are you doing?

ZUKO
Go ahead, I'll hold them off!
(grim)
I think this is a family visit.

AANG
Zuko! No!

SOKKA
Come on! We've got to get out of here!

Zuko runs out onto the main patio to see Azula rising through the clouds, riding atop the crow's nest that juts proudly from the top of her airship.

ZUKO
What are you doing here?

AZULA
(STRANGE, CRAZY LAUGHTER) You mean it's not obvious yet?

Azula sends a Firebending blast at Zuko, forcing him to dive out of the way.

AZULA (cont'd)
I'm about to celebrate becoming an only child!

Her airship opens up its immense arsenal of firepower on the patio and the adjacent room where our gang was sleeping. The patio begins to CRUMBLE, and half of the room starts to COLLAPSE. Unable to go back, Zuko improbably runs straight forward, with the FLOOR of the patio FALLING AWAY beneath him, and leaps out into thin air!

Inside the crumbling room, the gang sees Zuko disappear over the edge.

*

Zuko falls through a layer of clouds, punching a "POOF" hole through them as he goes. Sokka grabs Aang and pulls him back as the ROOF covering half of their sleeping room COLLAPSES, BOXING THEM IN.

They start to head out through the tunnel, but Aang is unable * to wrangle a terrified Appa through the hole as the whole temple shakes and rocks fall all around.

APPA
(SCARED MOANS)

AANG
I can't get him to go in there! Appa hates tunnels.

KATARA
Aang, there's no way we can fly out of here!

Aang looks at his giant, petrified bison, who refuses to budge.

AANG
We'll have to find a way.

SOKKA
We need to split up!

Sokka turns to Hakoda, Haru, Teo, The Duke and Chit Sang.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Take the tunnel and get to the stolen airship!

KATARA
No. The Fire Nation can't separate our family again!

HAKODA
It'll be okay. It's not forever.

Katara turns her back on Hakoda as he and Haru lead our extras through the tunnel and away from danger. Toph feels around, sensing the collapsed rock that stands between the kids and the now deadly airspace surrounding the temple.

TOPH
I can clear that away and we can fly out through there.

SUKI
(wary)
Um... there's an awful lot of fire in that general direction.

Aang gets a determined look on his face and pats Appa.

AANG
We'll get through.
(climbing on Appa)
Let's go.

Sokka, Suki and Katara hop on Appa as Toph Earthbends away their rock cover, opening up a hole to fly through. Sokka pulls Toph aboard Appa and they blast into the air.

OUT IN THE OPEN they're instantly surrounded by airships that begin raining down fire at them. Aang takes Appa on some wild evasive action, weaving through the ships and the shots. Katara Waterbends at the Firebenders on the airships, managing to knock a couple of them off of their stands, leaving them dangling from their harnesses.

Another burst of fire forces Appa to bank hard out of the way. Unfortunately, the sharp turn puts them face to face with Azula's airship. She smiles.

As she says it, Zuko miraculously slides into view behind Azula -- cue "Raiders of the Lost Ark" music -- he's caught a ride on top of the balloon of an airship! He starts running across the balloon of his airship, heading straight for Azula. As the kids spot Zuko, Azula sees the amazed look on the faces of the Avatar gang and turns just in time to see Zuko leap from his airship onto hers.

Azula gets off a shot at Zuko, but it goes wide. He lands on her airship and pops up, immediately Firebending at her. His shot destroys her crow's nest and she's forced to leap off. As she lands on the balloon of her airship, she and Zuko exchange fire again. Their intense battle ends with both of them skidding off the side of the balloon.

As Zuko tumbles off one side of the airship, Aang banks Appa down after him. Meanwhile, Azula skids down the other side, seeming like she's headed for a fall that will end her villainous career. Appa glides under Zuko, and he lands safely on the bison. Zuko quickly looks down to see Azula freefalling. We see on his face all the emotions that would plague a man who just fatally cut the Gordian knot of his sibling relationship.

ZUKO
(haunted)
She's not going to make it...

Meanwhile, Azula hurtles through space. Unfazed, she takes a breath and performs a brief Firebending blast which directs her freefall over to the rigging of a nearby airship. She hooks on to the rigging with one long, pointy fingernail.

Zuko shakes his head, frustrated but relieved in spite of himself, realizing that things never end cleanly in the world of "Avatar."

ZUKO (cont'd)
Of course she did.

As she dangles over oblivion, Azula glares angrily at the Zuko and the kids as they disappear through the clouds.

EXT. TEMPORARY CAMPSITE FAR FROM WESTERN AIR TEMPLE - EVENING

The gang, plus Suki and Zuko, of course, sits around the remains of a hearty campfire dinner in a good mood. Aang looks around.

AANG
Wow, camping. It really seems like old times again, doesn't it?

ZUKO
(dry, awkward)
If you really want it to feel like old times, I could, ah, chase you around for a while, and try to capture you.

Everyone LAUGHS, but Katara sits stone-faced.

KATARA
(sotto, under her breath)
Ha. Ha.

Sokka raises a toast.

SOKKA
To Zuko! Who knew after all those times he tried to snuff us out, today he'd be our hero?

Everyone raises a glass -- everyone except Katara.

EVERYONE, BUT KATARA
Here, here!

Aang pats Zuko on the back and Toph playfully punches him in the shoulder.

ZUKO
(humbly)
I'm touched... I don't deserve this.

KATARA
(mumbling sotto to herself)
Yeah, no kidding.

Katara gets up and storms off. There's an awkward silence around the campfire.

SOKKA
What's with her?

ZUKO
I wish I knew.

Zuko gets up and leaves, too.

SOKKA
What's with him?

Everybody else SHRUGS.

EXT. LOG SOME DISTANCE FROM CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Zuko finds Katara sitting alone on a log. When she sees him coming, she GETS UP to leave, turning her back on him.

ZUKO
This isn't fair. Everyone else seems to trust me now. What is it with you?

Katara faces him.

KATARA
Oh, everyone trusts you now?! I was the first person to trust you -- remember? Back in Ba Sing Se. And you turned around and betrayed me, betrayed all of us!

Katara starts to leave again.

ZUKO
(contrite)
What can I do to make it up to you?

KATARA
You really want to know?
(sarcastic)
Hmmm... Maybe, you could reconquer Ba Sing Se in the name of the Earth King. Or, I know! You could bring my mother back!

Zuko looks at her for a beat, then he gets the message and walks away.

EXT. SOKKA'S TENT - NIGHT

Zuko walks to Sokka's tent. He collides with Suki who's also on her way in there.

SUKI
(stammering)
Oops! Wrong tent!

ZUKO
Sorry. Do you need to talk to Sokka too?

She turns bright red and hurries away.

SUKI
Nope, not me.

Zuko shrugs.

INT. SOKKA'S TENT - A MOMENT LATER

Sokka turns, clearly expecting Suki -- he has a flower in his mouth.

SOKKA
(inviting)
Well, hellooo... Oh! (AWKWARD FLOWER SWALLOWING SOUND) Zuko, yes. Why would I be expecting anyone different?

Though somewhat distracted, Sokka sits and listens to Zuko who paces.

SOKKA (cont'd)
So what's on your mind?

ZUKO
Your sister -- she hates me! And I don't know why, but I do care what she thinks of me.

SOKKA
Nah, she doesn't hate you. Katara doesn't hate anyone. Except maybe some people in the Fire Nation...

Zuko looks at him. Sokka's said something significant.

SOKKA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(rambling)
No, I mean not people who are good, but used to be bad. I mean bad people. Fire Nation people who are still bad, who've never been good, and probably won't be, ever--

ZUKO
Stop. Okay, listen. I know this may seem out of nowhere, but I want you to tell me what happened to your mother.

SOKKA
What? Why would you want to know that?

ZUKO
Katara mentioned it before when we were imprisoned together in Ba Sing Se, and again just now when she was yelling at me. I think somehow... she's connected her anger about that to her anger at me.

SOKKA
It's not a day I like to remember.

SOKKA'S FLASHBACK

EXT. SOUTH POLE

We see YOUNG KATARA and YOUNG SOKKA look on in awe as the BLACK SNOW drifts down.

YOUNG KATARA
I'm going to find Mom...

Katara goes off, looking worried.

SOKKA (V.O.)
Many of the warriors had seen the black snow before, and they knew what it meant -- a Fire Nation raid.

We see shots as the SOUTHERN RAIDERS SHIPS arrive, and the fighting begins. YOUNG SOKKA is extremely cute as he tries to help Hakoda, Bato, and the other water tribe warriors fend off the invaders.

SOKKA (V.O.) (cont'd)
We were badly outnumbered. But somehow, we managed to drive them off -- as quickly as they came, they just left.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. SOKKA'S TENT - CONTINUOUS

SOKKA
I was so relieved when it was over. But... that's because I didn't know yet what had happened.
(beat)
I didn't know we'd lost our mother.

Zuko broods.

ZUKO
Wait. Can you remember any details about the soldiers who raided your village? Like, what the lead ship looked like?

Sokka thinks.

SOKKA
Yeah... sea ravens. The main ship had flags -- with sea ravens on them.

ZUKO
The symbol of the Southern Raiders... Thanks, Sokka.

Practically pushing Zuko out the door--

SOKKA
No problem! Thanks for stopping by.

Zuko exits.

SOKKA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(sigh of relief)
I thought he'd never leave!

He hurries out the door.

SOKKA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(stage whisper)
Suki?

Zuko, who hasn't gotten far, turns. Sokka smiles and starts WHISTLING. Zuko turns away, shrugging.

EXT. KATARA'S TENT - EARLY MORNING

Katara stumbles out of her tent to begin her morning. She's startled -- and annoyed -- to find Zuko sitting outside waiting for her. He looks exhausted. She passes him without stopping.

KATARA
(snaps)
You look terrible!

ZUKO
I waited out here all night.

KATARA
(cold)
What do you want?

ZUKO
I know who killed your mother, and I'm going to help you find him.

Off Katara's DUMBFOUNDED LOOK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Aang is grooming or feeding Appa when Katara approaches, followed by Zuko. Katara has DARK CIRCLES under her eyes, the beginning of her descent into her "revenge look."

KATARA
I need to borrow Appa.

Before Aang turns to look...

AANG
(joking)
Why, is it your turn to take a little field trip with Zuko?

KATARA
Yes. It is.

Aang turns and sees the deadly serious look on her face -- this isn't a joking matter.

AANG
Oh. What's going on?

KATARA
We're going to find the man who took my mother from me.

Sokka overhears and joins the group at this moment. Aang looks at Zuko -- they're serious. This isn't good.

ZUKO
Sokka told me the story of what happened. I know who did it -- and I know how to find him.

AANG
Um... and what exactly do you think this will accomplish?

Katara smiles sarcastically and shakes her head.

KATARA
(DISMISSIVE SOUND) I knew you wouldn't understand.

Katara turns to walk away.

AANG
Wait, stop! I do understand. You're feeling unbelievable pain and rage. How do you think I felt about the Sandbenders when they stole Appa? How do you think I felt about the Fire Nation when I found out what happened to my people?

ZUKO
She needs this, Aang. This is about getting closure -- and justice.

AANG
I don't think so, I think it's about getting revenge.

KATARA
Fine! Maybe it is, maybe that's what I need! Maybe that's what he deserves...

AANG
Katara, you sound like Jet.

KATARA
It's not the same. Jet attacked the innocent. This man... he's a monster.

Now Sokka chimes in.

SOKKA
Katara, she was my mother too. But I think Aang might be right.

KATARA
Then you didn't love her the way I did!

SOKKA
(hurt)
Katara...

AANG
The monks used to say that revenge is like a two-headed rat-viper. While you watch your enemy go down, you're being poisoned yourself.

A beat as this sinks in for a moment. But Zuko and Katara are still unmoved.

ZUKO
That's cute, but this isn't Air Temple pre-school, it's the real world.

KATARA
Now that I know he's out there... now that I know we could find him... I feel like I have no choice.

AANG
Katara, you do have a choice... Forgiveness.

ZUKO
That's the same as doing nothing!

AANG
No, it's not. It's easy to do nothing. But it's hard to forgive.

KATARA
It's not just hard. It's impossible.

She leaves.

EXT. CAMPSITE - LATER

It's the middle of the night. Katara and Zuko are loading up Appa as if they are about to depart on him. Suddenly, Aang catches them.

AANG
(angry)
So you were just going to take Appa anyway?

Katara turns around and looks at him, caught.

KATARA
(coldly)
Yes.

Aang shrugs.

AANG
It's okay. Because I forgive you.
(beat, then selling it)
That give you any ideas?

KATARA
Don't try to stop us.

AANG
I wasn't planning to. This is a journey you need to take. You need to face this man.

Katara NODS, appreciatively. She climbs on Appa.

AANG (cont'd)
But when you do... please don't choose revenge. Let your anger out -- and then let it go. Forgive him.

ZUKO
(rolling his eyes)
Okay, we'll be sure to do that, Guru Goodie-goodie.

Zuko climbs aboard Appa behind Katara. Aang ignores Zuko's taunts.

KATARA
Thanks for understanding, Aang.
(beat)
Yip, yip!

They take off. Sokka turns to Aang.

SOKKA
You know, you're pretty wise for a kid.

AANG
Thanks, Sokka.

SOKKA
Usually it's annoying, but right now I'm just impressed.

AANG
I appreciate that.

SOKKA
So... can I borrow Momo for a week?

AANG
Why do you need Momo?

SOKKA
(shrugs)
("I DON'T KNOW" SOUND)

EXT. SKY - APPA'S BACK - LATER

They fly above the ocean.

ZUKO
We need to find a Fire Navy communication tower. All the Navy's movements are coordinated by messenger hawk, and every tower has to be up to date on where everyone is deployed.

KATARA
So once we find a communication tower, we bust in and take the information we need.

ZUKO
Not exactly. We need to be stealthy, and make sure no one spots us. Otherwise, they'll warn the Southern Raiders long before we reach them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FIRE NAVY COMMUNICATION TOWER - NIGHT

After a nice friendly establishing shot of the tower, and some sound design telling us it's a quiet and still night, we see Appa safely hidden somewhere as Katara and Zuko quietly break-and-enter. Reminiscent of blue spirit action in 1.13 and Zuko and Jet food-stealing in 2.12, but we see that Katara and Zuko are a more awesome pair, an Avatar-style "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" that would make Bryan proud. In some exciting, yet to be devised sweet-ninja-stealth action, they sneak by unsuspecting guards, and overcome obstacles (based on the communication tower design) with their own awesome skills and working together with Zutara-fueling synchronicity and cooperation.

INT. FIRE NAVY COMMUNICATION TOWER - CONTINUOUS

More unspecified but MIND-BLOWING action, as they work their way inside to...

INT. FIRE NAVY COMMUNICATION TOWER - RECORDS ROOM

They're in! A room full of maps and diagrams showing various naval units' locations and movements. Zuko consults a key to the map...

ZUKO
(quiet)
Okay, Southern Raiders...

He goes back to the map. He's scanning, looking for them. He finds them!

ZUKO (cont'd)
Bam! On patrol near Whaletail Island.

Katara clenches her fist, her anger and determination gelling even more.

KATARA
Whaletail Island, here we come.

EXT. SKY - APPA'S BACK - EARLY MORNING

Appa cruises over the ocean. Zuko is sleeping. Katara is awake and looking dark. Zuko wakes up and notices she's still up.

ZUKO
You should get some rest. We'll be there in a few hours -- you'll need all your strength.

KATARA
Oh, don't you worry about my strength. I have plenty.

Katara gets a far off look.

KATARA (cont'd)
I'm not the helpless little girl I was when they came...

DISSOLVE TO:

KATARA'S FLASHBACK:

EXT. SOUTH POLE - DAY

We see YOUNG KATARA and YOUNG SOKKA (just as in the previous flashback) look on in awe as the BLACK SNOW drifts down.

YOUNG KATARA
I'm going to find Mom...

Katara goes off, looking worried.

EXT. SOUTH POLE - TENT - MINUTES LATER

YOUNG KATARA
Mom!

Katara arrives home and goes inside.

INT. SOUTH POLE - TENT - CONTINUOUS

Katara enters the tent to find her mother, KYA, being confronted by COMMANDER RHA, the leader of the Southern Raiders. She looks up at him -- and we see Young Katara's emotional face, as she looks up at COMMANDER RHA.

KYA
Just let her go... and I'll give you the information you want!

COMMANDER RHA
You heard your mother, get out of here!

Katara hesitates.

YOUNG KATARA
Mom... I'm scared.

KYA
Go find your dad, sweetie! I'll handle this.

She SMILES reassuringly, and Katara leaves, and RUNS.

KATARA (V.O.)
I ran as fast as I could...

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH POLE - FLASHBACK

Hakoda fights off a Southern Raider, knocking him off screen just as young Katara comes running up to him.

YOUNG KATARA
Dad, dad! Please, I think Mom's in trouble... there's a man in our house.

HAKODA
Kya!

Hakoda runs with Katara back to their home.

BACK TO PRESENT

KATARA
But we were too late. When we got there, the man was gone.
(sobs)
And so was she...

Zuko is moved... maybe even has a tear in his eye.

ZUKO
Your mother was a brave woman.

Katara puts her hand on her necklace.

KATARA
I know.

Katara lies down and closes her eyes.

DISSOLVE SMASH TO:

EXT. SKY - APPA'S BACK - HOURS LATER

Still on Katara's sleeping face...

ZUKO
There! See those sea raven flags? It's the Southern Raiders!

Katara's eyes open full of rage and anger.

KATARA
Let's do this!

She takes Appa down toward the head ship fast -- she's in all-out siege mode!

EXT. SOUTHERN RAIDERS' COMMAND SHIP - CONTINUOUS

A few of the raiders are on deck as Appa SWOOPS toward them. As Katara passes, she uses water from her water-sac to basically SLAP a few of the Southern Raiders on the back of the neck, then SWOOPS back up on Appa.

FIRE NATION SOLDIER #2
So there I was and I was like, you know--AHHHH!

She takes Appa UP, and CIRCLES around -- then makes another FAST PASS, flying by the left side of the ship. The raiders all MOVE to that side, and FIREBEND at them, as Appa deftly flies past, dodging the shots. Zuko DUCKS for cover.

Then, as she reaches the front of the ship, Katara turns and Waterbends an ICEBERG RAMP right in the ship's path, which it hits and LURCHES... tossing all the raiders who had gathered on the left side of the ship OVERBOARD.

Now Appa LANDS on the ship's deck, and Katara and Zuko DISMOUNT. Most of the threat has been thrown overboard, but there should be a soldier or two left who Zuko and Katara handily and easily fend off.

INT. SOUTHERN RAIDERS' COMMAND SHIP - MOMENTS LATER

Zuko and Katara make their way to the bridge or wherever the ship's commander would be. (There could be some more fighting inside the ship on the way here, or not, depending on whether we are "over-actioned" for this episode already.) Katara has a lot of energy and momentum, and Zuko pulls her back and STOPS her before they reach the door.

ZUKO
This is it, Katara. Are you ready to face him?

Katara answers by exploding two nearby water-filled BARRELS, and using the water inside to SMASH the door in front of them.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. SOUTHERN RAIDERS' COMMAND SHIP - COMMAND ROOM

The impressive-looking SOUTHERN RAIDER COMMANDER turns to face his attackers, sending FIREBALLS at each of them.

SOUTHERN RAIDER COMMANDER
Who are you?

ZUKO
You don't remember her? You will soon, trust me.

Katara and Zuko move in, quickly and efficiently -- he tries to defend himself, FIREBENDING viciously, but Katara and Zuko are an unstoppable force together.

Suddenly he stops Firebending... and lowers his hands to his side and stiffly sits down on the ground. He has a horrified look in his EYES.

SOUTHERN RAIDER COMMANDER
What's... wh-what's happening to me?!

We reveal Katara -- CONTROLLING him using the Puppetmaster move -- and we reveal her face, which has completed its transformation to the dark, angry "revenge look."

ZUKO
Think back. Think back to your last raid on the Southern Water Tribe.

SOUTHERN RAIDER COMMANDER
I don't know what you're talking about! Please, I don't know...

ZUKO
Don't lie! You look her in the eye and tell me you don't remember what you did.

He does look Katara in the eyes... and he's terrified. Then we see Katara's face CHANGE, as the rage disappears and her face goes FLAT... or turns to sadness.

KATARA
It's not him. He's not the man.

Katara releases him from her PUPPETMASTER GRIP and he collapses like a rag-doll.

ZUKO
What? What do you mean he's not? He's the leader of the Southern Raiders, he has to be the guy.

Katara shakes her head "NO". Zuko props the commander up, and holds him threateningly (or at least with self-assurance).

ZUKO (cont'd)
If you're not the man we're looking for... who is?

SOUTHERN RAIDER COMMANDER
(scared of Zuko)
You must be looking for Yon Rha... he retired four years ago.

FADE TO WHITE:

FADE IN:

EXT. EMBER ISLAND OR SIMILAR - ESTABLISHING

EXT. SAME ISLAND - BACKYARD GARDEN - DAY

An older man -- the retired commander YON RHA -- tends to his garden in his back yard. It's a peaceful, even idyllic retirement scene until...

SHREWISH MOTHER (O.S.)
Yon Rha, you lazy piece of work, I need something!

Yon Rha's mean and wrinkly and shrewish mother enters.

YON RHA
Yes, mother... what is it?

SHREWISH MOTHER
The tomato-carrots from your garden are too hard for my gums, I need something soft and juicy!

YON RHA
Would you like something else from the garden? I would be happy to--

SHREWISH MOTHER
Forget your stupid garden! Get your grimey hiney to the market and buy me some real food.

Yon Rha NODS.

EXT. MARKET - LATER

DARK STORM CLOUDS have begun to gather and move, and the wind is picking up. "Moody."

Yon Rha checks some fruits or vegetables at a market cart, when suddenly he gets a suspicious look. He looks behind him.

YON RHA
Hello?

He turns to the shopkeeper.

YON RHA (cont'd)
Did you see someone?

The shopkeeper SHRUGS.

EXT. EMPTY STREET - LATER

The clouds are even darker now, as a storm is clearly brewing. Possibly the sound of distant thunder. As Yon Rha walks home with a wrapped parcel, he stops in his tracks again. Did he hear something?

YON RHA
Hello! Is someone there?

He looks around, VERY SUSPICIOUS now that he is being followed. He HUSTLES down the empty street. As he gets off screen, we REVEAL Zuko and Katara hiding in the shadows.

KATARA
That was him. That was the monster.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Yon Rha WALKS QUICKLY down an alley, occasionally glancing behind him. He passes a large bush. A moment later, he turns and looks back at the bush. He sees it SHAKE just a little, and immediately FIREBENDS at it, setting it on fire.

YON RHA
Nobody sneaks up on me without getting burned! (CACKLES)

No one answers. It starts to RAIN, weakening the fire. Yon Rha turns to walk away, but immediately TRIPS on a wire that has been placed in his path -- he goes flying, landing with a THUD. When he looks up, rain falling in his face, he sees Zuko and Katara LOOMING above him.

ZUKO
We weren't behind the bush.

Zuko draws his swords.

ZUKO (cont'd)
And I wouldn't try Firebending again.

YON RHA
Whoever you are, take my money, take whatever you want... I'll cooperate.

Katara fixes him with an INTENSE STARE.

KATARA
Do you know who I am?

YON RHA
No, I'm not sure.

KATARA
Oh, you better remember me like your life depends on it! Why don't you take a closer look.

He scrutinizes her. Then he nods.

YON RHA
Yes, yes. I remember you now. You're the little Water Tribe Girl.

Off **YON RHA'S P.O.V.** of Katara's emotional face, we...

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

YON RHA'S FLASHBACK

Young Katara's emotional face, as she looks up at COMMANDER RHA. (This is the same scene as the ending few seconds of Katara's flashback, but we get to see it continue from Yon Rha's point of view after Katara is gone.)

KYA
Just let her go... and I'll give you the information you want!

COMMANDER RHA
You heard your mother, get out of here!

Katara hesitates.

YOUNG KATARA
Mom... I'm scared.

KYA
Go find your dad, sweetie! I'll handle this.

She SMILES reassuringly, and Katara leaves, and RUNS.

COMMANDER RHA
Now tell me... who is it? Who's the Waterbender?

KYA
There are no Waterbenders here. The Fire Nation took them all away a long time ago.

COMMANDER RHA
You're lying -- my source says there's one Waterbender left in the Southern Water tribe. We're not leaving until we find the Waterbender!

Katara's mom looks down.

KYA
If I tell you, do you promise to leave the rest of the village alone?

Commander Rha NODS. Katara's mom looks him dead in the eye.

KYA (cont'd)
It's me. Take me as your prisoner.

Commander Rha is truly evil.

COMMANDER RHA
I'm afraid I'm not taking prisoners today...

Off the FACE OF THE MONSTER, we...

MATCH DISSOLVE:

BACK TO THE PRESENT

And the PATHETIC FACE of the cornered, whimpering Yon Rha. As we come out of the flashback, the rain has really picked up and is POURING and there is definitely some thunder and lightning.

KATARA
She lied to you. She was protecting the last Waterbender.

YON RHA
What? Who?

Katara gathers the pouring rain around her in an IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY of her awesome Waterbending power.

KATARA
Me!

She DISCHARGES the water even more impressively, as Yon Rha cowers in terror.

YON RHA
I did a bad thing, I know I did. And you deserve revenge. So why don't you take MY mother, that would be fair!

Katara shakes her head "no."

KATARA
I always wondered what kind of person could do such a thing... but now that I see you, I think I understand. There's just nothing inside you -- nothing at all. You're pathetic and sad and empty.

YON RHA
Please spare me...

KATARA
But as much as I hate you -- I just can't do it.

A beat, as Yon Rha looks relieved, but then--

Yon Rha looks as if he's just lost his doo-doo.

They turn, and leave YON RHA alone, who just lies there WHIMPERING and possibly crying for a few beats, in the pouring rain.

EXT. BEACH - IN FRONT OF FIRELORD'S HOUSE - LATER

Katara stands alone on the beach, looking out over the water. Contemplative. The storm is over and the sky is beautiful and clear. In the distance, we see APPA APPROACHING. As Appa lands, we see Zuko aboard (as he's gone back to gather everyone and bring them to Ember Island.)

AANG
Katara!

Aang jumps off Appa.

AANG (cont'd)
Are you okay?

KATARA
I'm doing fine.

Zuko joins the two of them on the beach.

AANG
Zuko told me what you did... or what you didn't do, I guess. I'm proud of you.

KATARA
I wanted to do it -- I wanted to take out all my anger at him -- but I couldn't. I don't know if it's because I'm too weak to do it... or if it's because I'm strong enough not to.

AANG
You did the right thing. Forgiveness is the first step you have to take to begin healing.

KATARA
But I didn't forgive him. I'll <u>never</u> forgive him.

The three of them walk along the beach for another beat. Then Katara turns to Zuko.

KATARA (cont'd)
(to Zuko)
But I am ready to forgive you.

She gives Zuko a hug. Then she heads up the beach, leaving Aang and Zuko alone.

ZUKO
You were right about what Katara needed. Violence wasn't the answer.

AANG
It never is.

ZUKO
Then I do have a question for you. What are you going to do when you face my father?

Off Aang's look...

END OF SHOW